

Washington, D.C. - U.S. Reps. David Price (D-NC) and Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) today introduced a bill to enhance oversight of intelligence community contractors and prohibit the use of such contractors in prisoner detention operations, including such sensitive and controversial areas as interrogation and international prisoner transport. This is the latest effort by Price and Schakowsky to rein in the Bush Administration's wanton use of private contractors for sensitive national security-related activities.

Specifically, the bill would prohibit the intelligence agencies from outsourcing the following detention-related functions: arrest, interrogation, detention, transfer, and rendition. The bill would also require the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) to furnish Congress with an annual census of the number of contractors involved in intelligence work, the activities they are asked to perform, the cost associated with their work, and an account of Administration efforts to hold contractors accountable for possible misconduct, including violations of the law. And the contractor companies themselves would have to provide the government with more detailed information on their hiring and training processes, for example, in order for the agencies to exercise stronger oversight.

"Contracting in the intelligence community has more than doubled in scope in the last decade, and it's clear that effective management and oversight is lacking," Rep. Price said. "We've got to get a handle on it. That means demanding more complete information, establishing more effective management practices and, in some cases, drawing a red line to prevent the privatization of especially sensitive activities."

Rep. Price has been on the forefront of efforts in Congress to rein in the Bush Administration's unprecedented use of contractors for sensitive national security functions. He is the author of [legislation](#) that passed the House last October, which would enhance the government's prosecution of abusive actions by rogue security contractors. That bill was passed shortly after the infamous shootout in Baghdad's Nisour Square, in which contractors for Blackwater USA fired on unarmed civilians, killing 17.

Rep. Schakowsky has also led the charge on contractor accountability as a member of the House Intelligence Committee. Last year, Schakowsky worked closely with Rep. Price to amend the National Defense Authorization Act to create a database to track contracts and to make them available, for the first time, to members of Congress. In November 2007, Schakowsky introduced the Stop Outsourcing Security (S.O.S.) Act, which would phase out the use of private

military contractors in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"Our bill will take detention-related activities out of the hands of private contractors and put the responsibility back where it belongs, in the hands of authorized government personnel," said Rep. Schakowsky. "Outsourcing our most critical intelligence functions to unaccountable private contractors undermines the integrity of our intelligence and jeopardizes the safety of our troops. Simply put, private contractors should not be trusted with such mission critical activities."

The two members hope to include these reforms in the Intelligence Authorization bill, which is scheduled to be considered by the House Intelligence Committee later this week. During its consideration of that bill last week, the Senate Intelligence Committee adopted a prohibition on the participation of CIA contractors in prisoner interrogation.

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